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MICHELIN MotoGP™

MAG

***A BREATHLESS END  
TO A BREATH-TAKING SEASON!***



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## ***FOREWORD***

Ultimately, it all boiled down to a tale of two gravel traps... Marc Márquez came perilously close to ending 2017 in the Turn One kitty litter in Valencia after out-braking himself three-quarters of the way through the season-closing Gran Premio de la Comunitat Valenciana. However, the precociously talented Spaniard narrowly averted disaster by pulling off the kind of miraculous save that only he can. Andrea Dovizioso, his sole rival for the coveted crown, found himself trapped behind Ducati team-mate Jorge Lorenzo for much of the race. The Italian looked primed to pounce on Márquez's mistake when Lorenzo came unstuck and beached his bike in the Turn Five gravel not long after his countryman's error, only for Dovizioso to follow suit three corners later...

The destiny of the MotoGP laurels very nearly changed hands in just those few short laps but, ultimately, Márquez held on to secure his fourth premier class title in five years, with Dovizioso a commendable second at the end of a similarly impressive campaign. Unquestionably the class of

# ***MARC MÁRQUEZ RETAINS HIS CROWN***

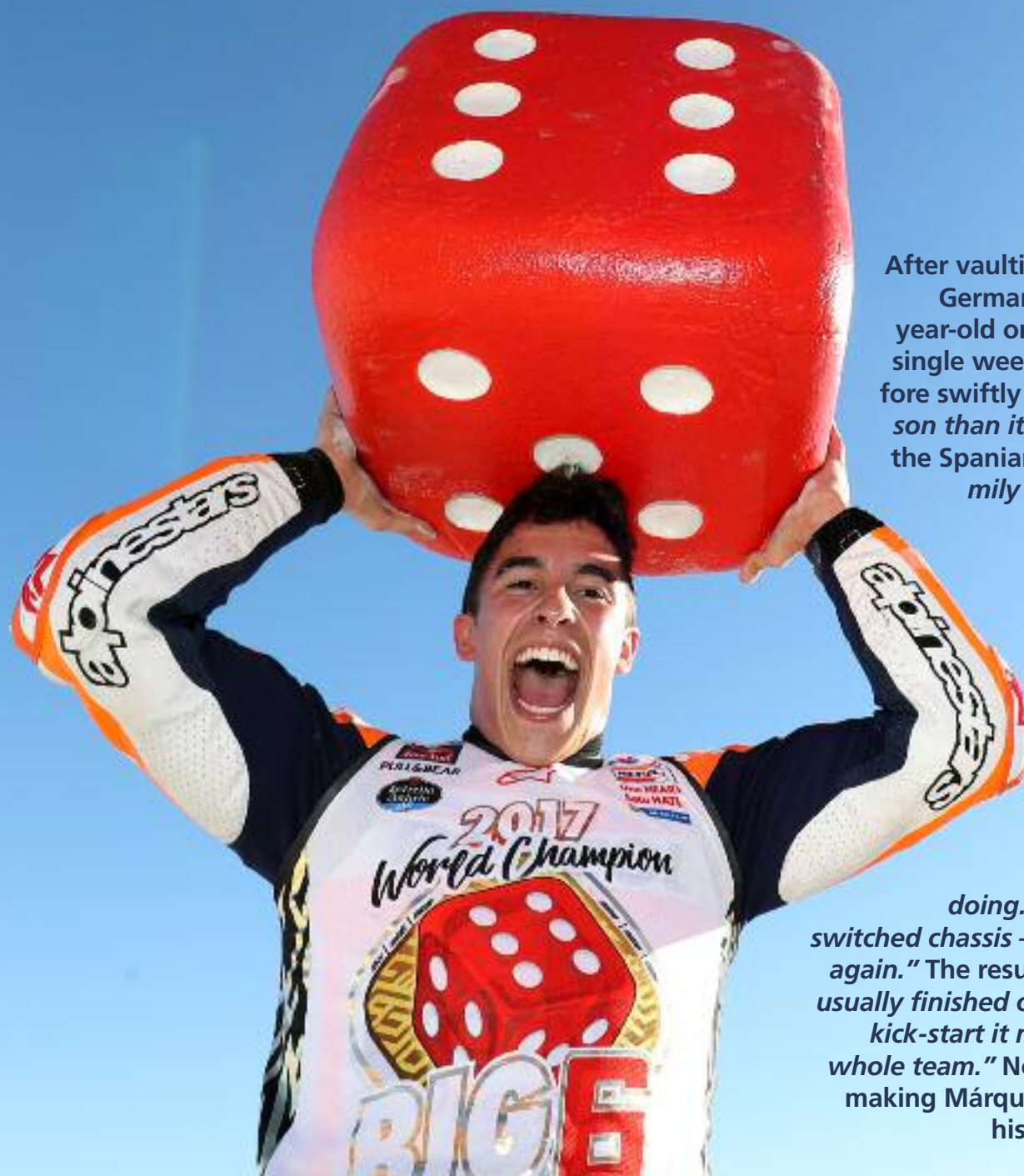


*He might have had to wait until the very last grand prix in Valencia to claim his fourth MotoGP title but, from mid-season onwards, Marc Márquez always looked like the man to beat. With a final tally of 12 podiums including six victories, the Honda star concluded the campaign 37 points clear of his closest rival, Andrea Dovizioso.*

Dovizioso entered the season finale as the only rider who could still pip Márquez to glory but, in order to do so, the Italian needed to win in Valencia while hoping the championship leader finished no higher than 12th. In reality, though, the situation played out rather differently, with the former falling and the latter ending up on the rostrum – meaning Márquez has now clinched the crown in four of the five seasons he has contested in the premier class.







Marc Márquez  
at Le Mans

After vaulting to the summit of the standings following his German triumph just before the summer break, the 24-year-old only subsequently conceded that advantage for a single weekend – due to engine failure at Silverstone – before swiftly reasserting his authority. *“It was a tougher season than it might have appeared from the outside,”* stated the Spaniard. *“I owe this title above all to my team, my family and my friends who have always supported me and helped to pick me up when things went wrong.”* Márquez revealed that there were certain moments during the year that had been particularly difficult: *“Following my accident at Le Mans, I was honestly at rock bottom. I wasn’t enjoying riding anymore.”* It took until June to reverse that trend. *“After the race in Barcelona, I noticed that I was beginning to lose my hair. My hairdresser advised me to go to the doctor, who told me that stress was the cause and that I would have to change my approach to racing – so that’s what I focused on doing. In addition to that, we did a lot of testing and I switched chassis – and the outcome was that I started having fun again.”* The results swiftly followed. *“From Germany onwards, I usually finished on the podium and that gave my season just the kick-start it needed. That’s why I say this title belongs to the whole team.”* Not only that, but it established another record in making Márquez the youngest six-time world champion in the history of grand prix racing at just 24 years of age.



**VICE-CHAMPION**



## ***DOVIZIOSO AND DUCATI CAUSE A STIR***

following a race-ending 'off' that torpedoed his title dream. *"I gave it everything I had, and I think we can be happy with what we have achieved this weekend,"* the Italian reflected. *"I attacked right from the first lap without making any mistakes, and that put us in a good position but unfortunately, the odds were always stacked heavily against us today."* Be that as it may, Dovizioso and the entire Ducati team can be very proud of their 2017 MotoGP campaign. With six victories and eight podium finishes to his credit, it was by far the 31-year-old's most successful season since his debut in the premier class back in 2008. It was a similar story for Ducati, who had not scaled such heady heights since its

world championship triumph with Casey Stoner a year earlier still. *"It has been comfortably our best season since I joined the team,"* enthused Ducati Corse General Manager Gigi Dall'Igna. *"I am proud of the efforts of our riders and technicians and of the manner in which we overcame the difficulties we encountered along the way. We retained our composure throughout and worked together in the right direction as a team, which kept us in the title fight all the way down to the wire in Valencia. We are under no illusions that the last step will be the toughest of all, but we will do everything in our power to return to our championship-winning ways."*



**ROOKIE**

# ZARCO AND TECH 3 MAKE THEIR MARK

In clinching the best rookie and best independent team accolades, Johann Zarco and Yamaha Tech3 similarly enjoyed a milestone year in 2017. *"Since Johann's very first laps on the bike in Valencia in November 2016, everything we have achieved has exceeded our objectives,"* acknowledges Hervé Poncharal, the boss of the French outfit. *"Nobody expected it to be such an incredible season, with three podiums, two pole positions, the 'Rookie of the Year' title, highest-placed independent rider and second-most laps led overall – the best of the Yamahas in that respect... Indeed, on five or six occasions, we were the first Yamaha past the chequered flag, and Johann played a key role in securing the marque second position in the final manufacturers' standings. It has been nothing short of remarkable."* For Nicolas Goubert, there is no doubt that Johann Zarco has a bright future ahead of him. *"What he has done during his maiden campaign in MotoGP is extremely impressive,"* asserts Michelin's Technical Director, *"both in terms of his results and his approach to the sport. I can scarcely remember a rider as dedicated, level-headed and conscientious in their manner of working – nor so impervious to pressure."*







## ***HARD RACING AND SUSPENSE FROM LIGHTS-OUT TO CHEQUERED FLAG***

In its second season as MotoGP's official tyre-supplier, Michelin successfully achieved its objectives. "Our tyres were more consistent," affirms Piero Taramasso, the man in charge of the brand's two-wheeled motorsport activities. "There were exciting battles at every circuit and the title fight went down to the very last race." It was a case of mission accomplished for the French company, whose products drew unanimous praise from the riders as well as MotoGP's six manufacturers. "Up until October, there were three riders and three different manufacturers still in the championship hunt," continues Piero. "In 2017, we took three choices of front tyre and three rears to each

track, to enable everybody to find the tyres best-suited to his riding style and the characteristics of his bike. We frequently saw the Ducati riders opt for the softest compound, as did Johann Zarco and Dani Pedrosa, while Marc Márquez, Cal Crutchlow and Andrea Iannone tended to prefer the harder option. The fact that the majority of grands prix saw five or six different specifications on the starting grid demonstrates that everybody found a satisfactory solution – and in Valencia, once again, there were three different combinations represented on the three steps of the podium."



## ***NO REST ON THE LOGISTICS SIDE***


As one season finishes, preparations are already well underway for the next. For Cédric Garde, the winter break – which forbids all testing between December 1 and January 28, when the bikes will return to the track at Sepang in Malaysia for the first time in 2018 – is not a day too short in light of everything that needs to be done ahead of the forthcoming campaign. *“We take advantage of this period to review and update our equipment,”* reveals the man in charge of Michelin’s tyre-fitting team. *“That includes not only the machinery but also all of the vehicles that we use for the European races. We additionally need to plan for the following season and prepare for the Sepang tests. The allocation of tyres that we will send to Malaysia is not dissimilar to what we take to a grand prix, and to that end, we have to get the containers ready a good month-and-a-half in advance.”* The tyre-fitting equipment that will be brought to this test will be the same as was used for the race at the same track back in October: *“We have machines set aside for the long-haul events, which we revamp back at base when they return to Europe after the Grand-Prix of The Americas.”* In 2018, those machines will subsequently be sent to Buriram at the end of September for the first Thailand Grand-Prix.

Workshop  
entry





## ***GOUBERT STEPS DOWN***

A photograph of Nicolas Goubert, a man with short brown hair, wearing a dark blue Michelin Motorsport jacket and a black cap with a yellow stripe. He is standing with his arms crossed, looking off to the side. In the background, other team members in similar blue uniforms are visible, some wearing headsets. The setting appears to be a motorsport paddock or garage with blue and yellow walls.

At the end of January, Nicolas Goubert will begin a fresh chapter in his professional career. The Michelin Motorsport Technical Director will leave the Clermont-Ferrand firm to embark upon a new adventure as Executive Director of the forthcoming electric motorcycle racing championship, the FIM Moto-e World Cup. "I have spent 28 years with Michelin," he reveals, "during which time I have been lucky enough to work in some truly exciting roles on several different continents, discovering new cultures and tackling a whole host of interesting and engaging technical challenges along the way... I can never thank Michelin enough for everything that I have experienced with them over all those years. That said, I felt the time was right to turn over a new page, and as such, I grabbed the opportunity that was offered to me – one that will allow me to continue working in the sport of motorcycle racing that I so love. I am leaving Michelin on excellent terms and pleased to see that our return to MotoGP was such a success, whole Michelin continues to be a strong contender in other forms of motorsport on four wheels, like the WEC and WRC."





**TYRES**

When a world championship relies on a single tyre-supplier, it goes without saying that the allocation of those tyres to competitors must be completely fair and transparent. Up until September, MotoGP Technical Director Danny Aldridge would gather all of the tyres and, on the Thursday of a grand prix weekend, randomly distribute them to all of MotoGP™ the teams.

## ***NEW SEASON, NEW TYRE DRAW***

With this system having come in for some criticism, however, and in order to silence certain rumours alleging favouritism towards one manufacturer or another, a new, lottery-style format was subsequently implemented. It is still Aldridge that manages the tyre distribution, but every team manager is now invited to attend the draw, to eradicate any doubts about impartiality.



**PATRICK ISACCO**

# ***SIGNING OFF IN STYLE***

To conclude one's career with one last victory and a championship title is what dreams are made of – and that was just what Patrick Isacco achieved in the GranPremio de la Comunitat Valenciana. The Repsol Honda Team's Michelin technician is set to retire in March 2018, and although he will still be present at the forthcoming winter tests, the 2017 season finale at Valencia's Circuit Ricardo Tormo marked the Frenchman's grand prix swansong. A humble and modest man, Patrick has worked with many of the sport's true greats, from Wayne Gardner to Mick Doohan, Àlex Crivillé, John Kocinski, Daryl Beattie, Max Biaggi, Alex Barros, Dani Pedrosa, Nicky Hayden and Valentino Rossi... *"And that's not even counting the ones I helped in 250cc and 125cc like Luca Cadalora, Tadayuki Okada, Tohru Ukawa, Nobuatsu Aoki, Stefan Bradl, Sito Pons, Reinhold Roth and several others,"* he recalls. During that time, he has always established excellent relationships with his riders and HRC's engineers, alongside whom he has worked closely for more than 16 years. Those same engineers prepared a special celebration in Valencia to mark Patrick's retirement. *"It was a lovely gesture and a very emotional moment,"* he admits. *"They produced a video featuring farewell messages from riders and technicians. It truly brought a tear to my eye."*







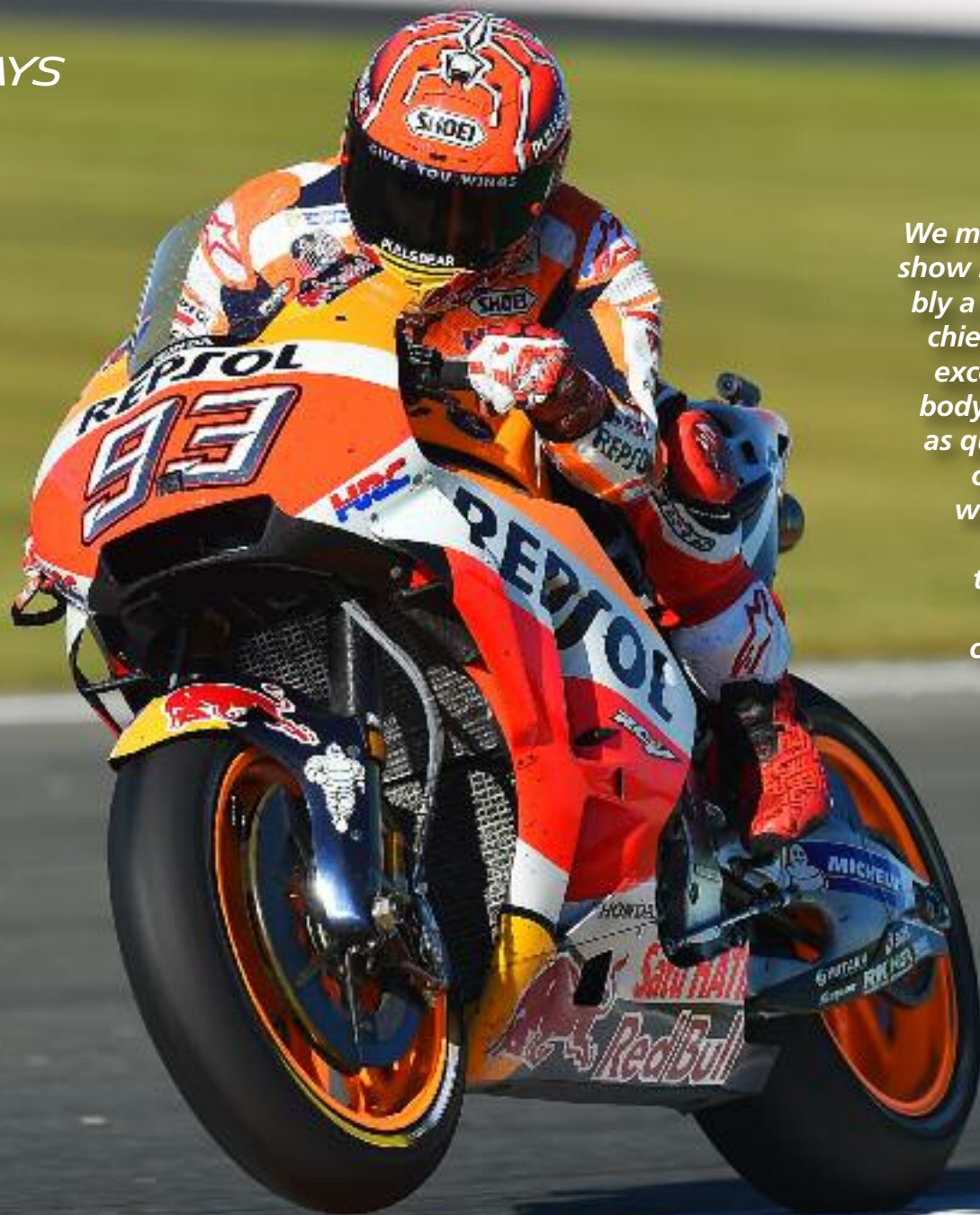
*"2017 drew to a close with a tense and exciting season finale in Valencia. Johann Zarco was in formidable form, underscoring the clear potential that he has shown all year. Although he was not quite able to hang onto the top spot right the way to the chequered flag, he demonstrated that his breakthrough victory is certainly not far away. He deserves it, and next year I am sure he will achieve it. It was also a pleasure to see Dani Pedrosa back at the top of his game, and he would likely have shone at Sepang, too, if the rain hadn't come. Ultimately, of course, it was all about Marc Márquez in Spain, as the home hero continued to take risks notwithstanding his championship-leading position.*

## ***NICOLAS GOUBERT SAYS***





*NICOLAS GOUBERT SAYS*



*We must thank him for the spectacular show he put on and he is unquestionably a very worthy champion, while his chief rival Andrea Dovizioso similarly excelled throughout the season. Nobody expected the Ducati riders to be as quick as they were in Valencia. My only slight disappointment is that we were not able to improve upon the overall race finishing time in this final grand prix, even though the lap times had been very encouraging during practice and the weather conditions were virtually identical. Last year in Valencia, we introduced the front tyre that everybody chose to run this season, but this time we didn't have the necessary grip. Things like that can sometimes be hard to explain."*



**TESTS**




# **2018 TESTS VALENCIA**





## ***NEW RUBBER COMPOUNDS***

A close-up photograph of a person's hand, wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt, using a piece of yellow chalk to mark a black Michelin tire. The tire is part of a stack of several other tires. Other tires in the stack have white chalk markings, including 'P2', '79', '10', 'P2', '55', 'P2', '83', '10', 'P2', '8', and 'X'. The background is slightly blurred, showing blue and white structural elements.

During the first end-of-season test in Valencia in preparation for 2018, a number of the MotoGP riders had the opportunity to try out Michelin's new rubber compounds. *"This year, our priority was to achieve stability,"* explains Piero Taramasso. *"We used the same rear tyre construction all season and from Mugello onwards, we did likewise for the front. That came at the request of the riders and teams, who were eager to work with a solid, established base, given that the profile and construction of a tyre have a direct influence on the geometry and set-*

*up of the bike."* With the sport's riders and manufacturers now widely satisfied with Michelin's offering, the development focus has shifted to adapting the rubber compounds to suit the different circuits on the calendar. *"What we are talking about here is individual feeling on the bike,"* confides Piero. *"During the tests at the beginning of the year, we will offer harder compounds for the front tyre, which are aimed specifically at improving our performance on the faster and more technically demanding tracks like Austin and Termas de Río Hondo."*



### LAP TIMES - BEST OF 2 DAYS

- 1 - MARC MARQUEZ (HONDA) .....1'30.033
- 2 - MAVERICK VIÑALES (YAMAHA) ....1'30.189 (+0.156)
- 3 - JOHANN ZARCO (YAMAHA) .....1'30.389 (+0.356)
- 4 - DANI PEDROSA (HONDA) .....1'30.436 (+0.403)
- 5 - VALENTINO ROSSI (YAMAHA) ....1'30.519 (+0.486)
- 6 - JORGE LORENZO (DUCATI) .....1'30.534 (+0.501)
- 7 - JACK MILLER (DUCATI) .....1'30.635 (+0.602)
- 8 - CAL CRUTCHLOW (HONDA) .....1'30.654 (+0.621)
- 9 - ALEIX ESPARGARO (APRILIA) ...1'30.756 (+0.723)
- 10 - ANDREA DOVIZIOSO (DUCATI) 1'30.850 (+0.817)...







***THANK YOU GENTLEMEN***





***THANK YOU GENTLEMEN***





## 2017 RANKING

1 - MARQUEZ (HONDA).....	298
2 - DOVIZIOSO (DUCATI).....	261
3 - VIÑALES (YAMAHA).....	230
4 - PEDROSA (HONDA).....	210
5 - ROSSI (YAMAHA).....	208
6 - ZARCO (YAMAHA).....	174
7 - LORENZO (DUCATI).....	137
...	

	DATE	GRAND PRIX	CIRCUIT	
		PRE-SEASON	SEPANG, PHILIP ISLAND, LOSAIL	MAG 8
1	26/03	QATAR	LOSAIL INTERNATIONAL	
2	09/04	ARGENTINA	TERMAS DE RÍO HONDO	MAG 9
3	23/04	AMÉRICAS	CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS	
4	07/05	SPAIN	CIRCUITO DE JEREZ	
5	21/05	FRANCE	LE MANS	MAG 10
6	04/06	ITALY	MUGELLO	
7	11/06	CATALUNYA	BARCELONA-CATALUNYA	
8	25/06	NETHERLANDS	TT CIRCUIT ASSEN	MAG 11
9	02/07	GERMANY	SACHSENRING	
10	06/08	CZECH REPUBLIC	AUTOMOTODROM BRNO	
11	13/08	AUSTRIA	RED-BULL RING	MAG 12
12	27/08	GREAT BRITAIN	SILVERSTONE	
13	10/09	SAN MARINO	MISANO	
14	24/09	ARAGÓN	MOTORLAND ARAGÓN	MAG 13
15	15/10	JAPAN	TWIN RING MOTEGI	
16	22/10	AUSTRALIA	PHILLIP ISLAND	MAG 14
17	29/10	MALAYSIA	SEPANG INTERNATIONAL	
18	12/11	VALENCIA	CIRCUITO RICARDO TORMO	MAG 15

